



## **Discussion Group Packet**



## **Film Discussion Guidelines**

Next week you will be leading the class in a discussion of the film you just saw. In other words, you will be teaching the class. That's kind of scary at first, but most of the students who have done it really seemed to enjoy it and got a lot out of it. Most of the groups have done some very good things. Here are some guidelines to help you make your class successful:

- Plan enough activities to teach the entire class period. In reality I will need about 5-10 minutes at the end of class to talk about the next film, etc., but it is better for you to have too many activities than not enough.
- The most important thing about class discussion is to involve the class as much as possible. Some ways to do this:
  - Break the class up into small discussion groups of about 5 students to talk about questions you ask.
  - Write the questions you want students to discuss on the board and make sure they know what you want them to do.
  - When students are discussing among themselves all the members of your group should circulate around the room listening in on discussions to help students as necessary and to make sure that they are speaking English.
  - If students aren't responding to your questions it's OK to call on them anyway.
  - It's OK to use Chinese names when calling on students.
  - Have students stand when they talk. This makes it easier to hear them in the back of the room.
- Giving background information on the movie is OK but please don't use information from the textbook; students can read this for themselves. The internet is a great source of new information. Please limit background information and plot summaries to about 5 or 10 minutes.

## Activities for Film Discussions

**Important:** All activities *must* be directly related to the movie. Party games and other activities not related to the movie are not allowed.

You can use any or none of these ideas; it's up to you:

1. Collect questions from other students in your class and put the questions into categories:
  - Scenes or things that happened in the movie that they did not understand or would like to know more about.
  - Slang and idiomatic expressions that they don't know.
  - Discussion questions they would like to talk about, i.e., the last question on the post-viewing homework.

Combine similar questions and then plan for some time during your class to discuss questions in each category.

2. Move groups up to sit in the front of the class instead of at their tables.
3. Write up a summary of the movie plot and then print a copy for each group. Cut the copies into strips, one paragraph or sentence on each strip. Mix up the strips and give them to the groups. The groups have to put the strips in the right order.
4. Have students imagine what happened to the characters 5-10 years after the movie was over.
5. Have students write their own questions about the movie then ask them to the class.
6. For the last activity, ask every student in the class to rate the film in stars, 5 stars being great, 4 good, etc. and tell why they think so. Tally the number of stars on the board using English-type tally marks (ⅢⅢⅢ).

## **How You Will Be Graded**

Each member of the discussion group will be graded on a 10-point scale. In order to get all 10 points, you must follow the “Film Discussion Guidelines” in the front of this packet. In addition, you must do at least some of the following:

- Use questions provided by your classmates.
- Display some initiative and creativity in order to keep the class involved and interested in your class session.
- Avoid wasting time.
- Talk with your teacher before your discussion group’s presentation if you are unsure about what to do.
- Involve the class in some activities we haven’t seen before.
- Be well prepared, especially if you are presenting dialog or role plays.

# **The Joy Luck Club**

## **Possible Topics for ESL Class Discussion**

### **From ESLnotes.com:**

1. Do you think parents have a harder time knowing their own children if they are raised in a different culture from their own?
2. Are the tensions seen here between the mothers and daughters part of most mother-daughter relationships, or is it specific to immigrants?
3. What are the biggest differences in culture between 1940s China and 1980s America? In terms of society's treatment of women, how much has China changed since the stories seen in this film?
4. How are men portrayed in this film?
5. Of all the mother's, whose story was the most dramatic?

### **More Questions:**

1. For classes that studied the book by Amy Tan in another class, how is the movie like the book? How is it different?
2. Two movies we saw first semester, *Dead Poet's Society* and *The Graduate*, also explored relationships between parents and their children. Compare these relationships to the relationships between parents and children in *Joy Luck Club*.
3. *Hope* is a major theme in both *Joy Luck Club* and *Shawshank Redemption*. Compare the meaning of hope in the two movies.